1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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XXXVII

THE TALENSE (*continued*)

Tɔŋ-nab

THE ceremony I am about to describe was one which I witnessed on Sunday 6 May 1928. It was, perhaps, the most interesting and extraordinary of many curious rites which it has been my privilege to attend in the course of many years of anthropological field-work. Perhaps I regard it thus because particular associations have made it so for me, but I use the word 'extraordinary' advisedly, on account of the almost grotesque blending of the ultra-new with the things which are very old. Flying machines, motor-cars, and the cultivation of cocoa—these seem out of place with pagan gods and naked humanity, but in this ceremony all were mingled, and staged in a setting which must have been familiar to troglodyte man. *Tɔŋ-nab*[1] means literally the Chief of Tɔŋ. Its shrine is perhaps the best known in the country about which I write, and its fame and name have passed beyond the boundaries of the Northern Territories and reached as far down as to the sea-board towns of the Gold Coast.

'Its power is from God (*Na Ŋin*); its priest is the local *Ten'dan*'; its taboos, which must be observed by all its devotees, include the following avoidances:

(*a*) Clothes, when attending ceremonies in connexion with its cult.
(*b*) *Zia-kom* (corn and water mixed).
(*c*) Beer made from *zia*-corn.
(*d*) *Meŋa* (water turtle).
(*e*) *Sakur* (tortoise).
(*f*) *Bandog* (crocodile).
(*g*) *Wafo* (python).

An oath may be taken on this god, which runs: *M'po Tɔŋ nab la a zia koom* (I swear by *Tɔŋ nab* and its corn-water).

The home of this deity is in the Tong Hills, that beautiful low range which rises from the compound-scattered millet flats below. There seem to be two rendezvous at which the hundreds of pilgrims, who come from all quarters in the dry seasons to make their vows before this shrine, foregather. After climbing from the plains one enters a rugged

[1] It is also known as *Ta ni* and *Ta pwiga*.

1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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defile, which winds up the hill-side and then suddenly emerges on a grassy table-land, the home of countless flocks of wild guinea-fowl. There are no villages or compounds on the summit, for, after the punitive expedition many years ago, the people were ordered to come down from the hill-tops and live in the valley.

The god itself, which is supposed to be an emanation of the Supreme Being, does not, as far as I could discover, possess any shrine beyond a natural temple in the form of a large rock cavern, where the service about to be described was held, and a rock altar, that may or may not have been natural, in front of a second cavity in the rock not very far from the first cave, the entrance to which was hung with filthy old rags. The altar was so smothered in fowls' feathers, which also lay more than ankle deep on the ground, that I could not be certain of its composition.

On the morning of the ceremony I reached the rocks below the first cave about 8 a.m. and found I was the first arrival. The Chief of Tenʼzugu and the *Tenʼdan*' had not yet appeared. From then onwards, until about 9 a.m., groups of pilgrims began to arrive. To my wonder and astonishment I saw well-dressed Africans, men and women who I later discovered, had motored hundreds of miles from Kumasi, Kwahu, and Mampon. Among these were several of my Ashanti friends of old days, and never shall I forget the look of amazement on their faces at meeting me again in such a place. About 9 a.m. the Chief of Tenʼzugu and the *Tenʼdan*' arrived. The former was a really magnificent-looking man, standing well over six feet and very finely proportioned. He was covered in amulets and fetishes, as was the *Tenʼdan*' (see Figs. 73 and 74).

I told them (as we had indeed already arranged) that I would like to attend the ceremony and register my wish and make my vows. They asked permission to go forward and make preparation, and soon afterwards I heard the rhythmic clapping of hands, which was faintly audible to us below. All the pilgrims now began to undress. The Coast women disrobed and put on shorts; hats, shoes, white pith helmets, and clothes were piled up and scattered over the boulders (see Fig. 75). We were now called to come forward, and climbed up the rocks until we came to the low entrance of the cave (see Fig. 76). This we were asked to enter backwards. Soon the cave was packed so full that many were sitting on their companions' legs and laps. I know I had a person on each knee. Some one asked me to give my name and what I wanted. I asked Aboya, who was with me, to state the nature of my work; how I was trying to record their ancient customs, that the best of them

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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tribes with different taboos, they must observe these in addition to the taboos of their own clan. One segment of Samiit, which also belongs to this congregation, is prohibited in addition from eating the snake, so a supplicant coming to the *Bɔɣar* sponsored by Samiit must refrain also from eating the snake. Wannii, another well-known External *Bɔɣar* in the Hills, includes in its congregation only clans and lineages which taboo the snake and crocodile as well as the tortoise and water-tortoise. Hence, children of strangers who are the spiritual wards of this *Bɔɣar* must avoid all four animals. Clans and lineages that have atypical totems also have independent External *Bɔɣa*.

Among the Hill Talis, then (and this applies also to the people of Zubiuŋ and Gbeog), common totems generally indicate membership of the same External *Bɔɣar* congregation. This means that the clans and lineages concerned are subject to common ritual sanctions in terms of the ancestor cult, embodied in common cult objects and ceremonies. It implies obligatory bonds of amity and interdependence on the politico-ritual plane, prohibiting recourse to arms, for example, as a means of redressing wrongs between member lineages of the same congregation, or acts of hostility such as the abduction of a fellow member's wife, though he may not be a kinsman. It implies formal duties of member lineage to member lineage in funeral ceremonies; and it creates a feeling of belonging together, of spontaneous goodwill towards one another, among the member lineages, which even the bitter political dissensions of to-day have not altogether destroyed. Belonging to the same religious community in itself connotes social ties analogous to those of clanship.

The *Bɔɣar* cult resembles other forms of ritual observance tied to the notion of descent in that there is an oath associated with it. It emphasizes the key idea of the cult, the dominance of the collective ancestors, as we shall see shortly. For that matter, this idea is the main theme of all the rites and doctrines of the cult—the initiation of youths by 'handing them over to their ancestors' as the Talis put it; the Harvest and Sowing Festivals; and no less in such minor things as entrusting a recalcitrant wife, the source of future descendants, to the *Bɔɣar* or the coercion of an adulterous wife by means of it.

But before we deal with these points, an aspect of the *Bɔɣar* cult to which we have previously referred must be further discussed. An External *Bɔɣar* can become the spirit-guardian (*sɛɣər*) of an individual. An ancestor spirit who becomes a person's spirit-guardian is defined in native religious doctrine as 'He who has my life in his keeping so that I exist (*ɔn m-mar n-ɣovor ka mbɛ*)', and the ward (*sɛɣəraan*) must keep the totemic avoidances of the *Bɔɣar* community. This applies particularly to non-Talis (Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, and others) who come as pilgrims to the *Bɔɣar* to supplicate for children. The special bonds of ritual dependence thus created include both the parents and the children born, as the natives believe, in answer to their prayers. The Hill Talis themselves keep the avoidances whether or not they are personally the wards of the *Bɔɣar*; for, as they put it, they are all *ipso facto* under its spiritual guardianship.

If a stranger pilgrim has a child in answer to his prayers, his first duty

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776 is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔyar* in return.
●788 Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔyar* to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into com-
[551] munion with it. Wards of the *Bɔyar* have prescribed names according to their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔyare; later children have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of
[582] sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* before she goes to her husband.

769 The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔya* extends, also, to
648 whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here
574 it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔyar* of the Hill Talis has a traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi; and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace, and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔyar*. From time to time reciprocal visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis
[609] lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔyar*. These visitors, coming as emissaries of the *Bɔyar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe conduct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔyar*.

784 The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔyar* are instances
776 of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a
184 matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for instance. Then the ward (*sɛyɔraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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731 Whether there is food or famine, a bare sufficiency or a surplus for the
241 majority of people, depends on other things than human efficiency. It depends enormously on the weather. Drought (*waar*) in the early months of the rainy season brings hunger; an erratic distribution of rainfall causes a poor harvest; an unusually violent tornado (*sanziug*), crushing and uprooting the young millet, produces a shortage. Locusts (*tinta'aba*) descending suddenly, inexplicably, on the half-grown crops and devouring them, ruin the most efficient farmer's work. These are public calamities beyond human control, and they are an ever-present danger. During my first tour in Taleland a long gap in the normal sequence of the early rains threw everybody into a state of foreboding. Men went about restlessly, waiting anxiously for a sign of rain. During my second tour locusts destroyed the crops in one part of the country. The grief and chagrin of those whose crops had suffered showed that they felt they had suffered an irreparable loss.

164 Another possible natural disaster which would destroy physical well-
165 being and rend the social fabric is an epidemic of small-pox (*zinzaaŋ*) or of measles (*kasoo*).[1] Cases of *kasoo* occur every year and the mortality is high. I have heard of more than one family in which several children died of it in a week or two. Naturally the natives, who have no remedy for it, regard it with terror. The last small-pox epidemic (before 1937) occurred about a generation ago. The natives know that the white man's precautions will check any future epidemic, but they still dread the danger. For small-pox, when it comes, devastates social life. People stop visiting
[766 their kinsfolk and neighbours; stricken families are isolated by a wall of
758] thorn bushes; those who die of small-pox are not even given proper burial but are interred in the midden heap or thrown into the uncultivated bush. At such times small-pox must be referred to by a euphemism. It is 'the chief' (*na'ab*), and a death due to it is 'the chief has bestowed a boon (*na'ab maalya*)'.

731 These are the ever-possible public calamities which defeat human effort and skill. Private dangers also threaten the individual farmer. A snake might bite him as he stoops to hoe; blight might destroy his millet but leave his neighbour's farms unaffected; sickness might lay him low or deprive him of the help of wife or son.

● 783 It must not be thought that the Tale farmer goes about in a permanent
771 state of fear of these external dangers to his welfare and security. When
782 things are going well he does not give a thought to them. Living, as they do, at a subsistence level that gives them no regular surplus over what they require to satisfy their normal wants, the Tallensi take no long-term precautions, either individually or collectively, against the dangers of starvation or pestilence. They have neither the technical means nor the social institutions for such measures. But these threats do materialize often enough for them to serve as the realities towards which Tale acts of ritual self-protection, both individual and collective, are directed. Tallensi do not believe that these ritual acts will prevent natural disasters

[1] From the natives' description of the symptoms, I think the sickness they call *kasoo* is probably measles, but I am not certain and I have not been able to obtain medical corroboration.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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or personal mishaps. They do not attempt to control nature by means of ritual, though the content of their prayers might persuade the superficial observer that this is their object. Their ritual is concerned with the effects of natural phenomena and physiological happenings on the fate of the individual and the coherence of the community. Ritual is the means of fortifying the individual and the society against these effects. Tallensi believe that the fate of individuals and of communities depends on their relationships with mystical powers. Natural phenomena are the medium, as it were, by means of which these powers intervene in human affairs. If men offend them, they will intervene disastrously; if men please them, they will intervene beneficently. And men offend or please the mystical powers by the manner in which they behave to one another and by the way in which they observe the moral norms of the society and the ritual duties that symbolize these norms. Ritual—that is, sacrifice and prayer—is a means of keeping up a good relationship with the mystical powers. These, as we know, are principally the ancestors and the Earth.

Striving after Security: the Ritual Background

We have tried to state briefly how the Tallensi connect their ritual conceptions with their striving after personal prosperity and social security. This can be put in another way. The individual farmer, working his own land with the aid of his dependants for their common subsistence, looks to his and their immediate ancestors for spiritual protection. He and his dependants are personally responsible for the success of their efforts in the working of their fields. They are also personally responsible for the goodwill of their immediate ancestors. The sacrifices and prayers they offer to their ancestors at sowing and harvest express these private concerns. They enable them to enjoy the fruits of their labour with a clear conscience and to overcome the demoralizing effect of accidents, which they regard as private misfortunes.

On the other hand, public calamities are associated with the mystical powers of the Earth, which are a symbolical projection of the common concerns of mankind. By prayers and sacrifices the ritual officers who represent the community in relation to the Earth and the Earth in relation to the community, the tendaanas, preserve the benevolence of the Earth towards mankind. Even though ritual measures often and obviously fail to prevent a public calamity, they serve to reintegrate the community after the calamity has passed. The idea of the Earth's being concerned with the common good corresponds to the fact that the cultivations of individuals are but parcels of land cut from the limitless earth.

Just as the earth's surface is limitless, so the mystical power of the Earth is universal.[1] All men everywhere acknowledge this in the ritual observances by which they show their respect for the Earth. The most important of these observances are the rules concerning 'things found on

[1] The word *tɛŋ* belongs to the *ka—si* Noun Class and takes the third person singular pronoun *ka*. This is the pronoun always used to refer to the earth in its material aspect. But in its mystical aspect the Earth is commonly referred to by the third person singular pronoun *a* which is primarily used for persons. To conform with this rule, we write 'earth' in the first sense with a lower-case initial letter, and 'Earth' with a capital letter for the latter.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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178 438 578 [556] precedence over the others. All are equally essential for the maintenance of the social equilibrium and competition between them is absolutely excluded. Now the possibility has arisen of acquiring unlimited wealth through these same offices, by a miracle, almost, and from external sources. They have become commercially valuable. And the Tallensi, perhaps because of their great poverty of material goods, their general equality of wealth, and their undifferentiated productive system, are extremely acquisitive. Some of them have shown a natural cupidity for riches and power, and a skill in the pursuit of these gratifications, for which their native way of life formerly gave little scope.

794 648 In our references to the cult of the External *Bɔyar* we discussed chiefly the significance of the *Bɔyar* for the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans among themselves. But, as we have mentioned, the cult also has an important role in the external relations of these clans. Each *Bɔyar* has a well-defined sphere of influence in one or other of the tribes adjacent to the Tallensi, or within easy access of the Tong Hills, the Mamprusi, the Bulisi, the Woolisi, the Gɔrisi, and even some of the Mossi sub-tribes. Thus a number of villages in the south-west of Mampurugu are in the sphere of interest of Bona'ab, the *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardem are the senior custodians, whereas many villages in the south-east of Mampurugu come into the sphere of influence of the Degal *Bɔyar*. The villages are further divided up so that each of the maximal lineages belonging to a *Bɔyar* congregation has several villages, or sections of several villages, as its particular clients. This aspect of the cult is by no means a mere side-line. It is an intrinsic and obviously old-established feature of it. The best proof of this is the fact that Hill Talis clans which claim to be of immigrant origin usually cite those parts of the adjacent non-Tale areas where they have client villages as their probable homes of origin. Similarly the ritual officials of these villages whom we mention below often explain their association with the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Talis by a myth of descent from an immigrant from the Tong Hills.

794 788 648 From these client villages, as we have already learnt, pilgrims come to the *Bɔyar* regularly, particularly in the dry season. They come individually to supplicate for health, prosperity, and especially for the boon of children. As children born in answer, ostensibly, to such requests are the spiritual wards of the *Bɔyar*, many pilgrims come as 'children of the *Bɔyar*' to offer thanksgiving gifts and sacrifices, or atonement sacrifices for a misdeed. But more important are the pilgrims who come annually as official representatives of their villages. They are usually the tendaanas of the villages, and they come to beg for the blessings of the *Bɔyar* on the village, for its health, and for a successful farming year; or if there has been sickness, or a failure of crops or any other misfortune in the past year, to bring atoning sacrifices to the *Bɔyar*. The ritual offices these men hold in their own villages are under the aegis of the *Bɔyar*; and through them the *Bɔyar* exercises considerable influence in the affairs of a client village. For to these outsiders the *Bɔyar* is an oracle as well as a shrine, manifesting itself through the medium of a mysterious subterranean voice, whose advice, admonitions, and demands are interpreted by its custodians.

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This aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult had great economic and social importance, in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt cloth, hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔyar*, that is, the Primordial Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice. Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal lineages which own the particular *Bɔyar*. Nowadays these gifts are of small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its sponsor with the *Bɔyar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔyar*, to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔyar*. But these services are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors. Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relationships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔyar* cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor, farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes to lay before the *Bɔyar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims. Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔyar*. They receive the right to

[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔyar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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788 set up a shrine affiliated to Tɔŋna'ab at their own homes, and these
782 shrines are used by them (*vide* Field, op. cit.) in their own ritual practice
425 to cure witchcraft and dissipate other forms of magical misfortune or misdeeds.

431 This traffic is extremely profitable to the Hill Talis concerned in it.
788 The pilgrims bring gifts in money and kind beside which the traditional gifts of Mamprusi or Bulisi client villages pale into insignificance. Those
439 who have received benefits bring gifts. The medicine men who own
434 affiliated shrines pay heavily for the privilege and bring periodical gifts in gratitude for benefits received. These vary from a pound or two to £10, £20, and in at least one case, for the authenticity of which I have good evidence, £100. In addition the pilgrims pay generously for their board and lodging and for animals which they offer in sacrifice at the *Bɔyar*.

556 From the beginning this traffic was monopolized by one maximal
439 lineage of Tɛnzugu, Gɔlibdaan yidɛm of Bunkiuk. The head of this
471 lineage, the Gɔlibdaana, a shrewd and resolute man of unbounded ambition, was, until the recent political reorganization of the country, recognized by Government as the headman of the Hill clans. He used his political authority to keep the pilgrim traffic with the south in his own hands, allowing only a minor share of the profits to go to his fellow ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* (Wannii) to which his lineage belongs. With the aid of the young men of his lineage and young men of other Tɛnzugu clans attracted to him by the lure of gain he has built up a complex organization for keeping contact with Ashanti and Colony pilgrims and clients and for stimulating the flow of pilgrims. By Tale standards he is a Croesus, but it would be hopeless for an outsider to attempt to estimate his wealth. It is enough to see his huge and well-kept homestead, his [595] eighty wives, the sumptuous clothes he affects, the extravagance of his gifts to friends and adherents, to realize that he must derive an income of several hundred pounds a year entirely from this pilgrim traffic.

Though he is himself the principal beneficiary of this monopoly, all the members of his maximal lineage, except one segment, co-operate in running it and benefit from it. His closest partners are some of his own half-brothers and cousins, and their share of the profits is enough to make them considerably more wealthy than the average native. Two or three henchmen belonging to other Tɛnzugu clans and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar* whose presence is essential for the performance of the rites of accepting the pilgrims get about the same 'rake-off' as his near agnates. On a rough estimate I should say that the Gɔlibdaana keeps about half the profits and divides the other half among the other [595] men interested in the business. This enables these others—his close agnates, his henchmen, and the other ritual functionaries of the *Bɔyar*—to have from five to nine wives each, where the ordinary native of similar age and status would have at most two or three wives; and the number of wives a man has is a good indication of his income in terms of food-supply and cash. The economic system of the Tallensi provides no outlets for this wealth in new economic enterprise. What cannot be invested in wives, live-stock, and clothes, or consumed in the form of

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857 with sacrifice and least about the beliefs and theories. He is familiar
524 with all the concepts of Tale religion and magic but cannot assign
869 them accurately to their relevant contexts. He knows that ancestor spirits and medicines are different, and can even describe some of the latter by their functions, but cannot elucidate these differences. He knows also and believes that health, prosperity and success depend on mystical agencies, that sickness, death, and misfortune are caused by them, and that sacrifices must be made to placate them or to expiate offences. He has heard talk of all this and seen consultations of diviners. As an infant, perhaps, he has been called by his mother to get off a partition wall 'lest the spirits push you off', or has seen food put out 'for the spirits' during the ritual festivals. He knows what different types of shrines look like and what are their appurtenances. But it is surface knowledge, confused in details and full of gaps.

857 Ritual is men's business, though women are well versed in it.
524 Hence it emerges mostly in the play of boys and not of girls. Signifi-
869 cantly, it is permitted till pubescence, that is, as long as a boy is not
781 likely to take a responsible part in real ritual. After that he is liable to
●788 have to accept an ancestor spirit demanding real sacrifices and may no longer play at it. At 13 or 14 years of age, when a boy's ritual schemas approximate those of an adult, he fully understands and acquiesces in this prohibition. It suggests, however, that playing at ritual has a different value for children than actual ritual has for adults. Children share the adults' interest in ritual and accept its prescriptions, but not the adults' emotional relationship to ritual. In their play they express this interest and their identifications, rehearse their knowledge, and integrate it with the rest of their educational achievements.

857 Small boys build shrines a few inches high for themselves in a corner
524 of the cattle-yard. They take great pains to achieve verisimilitude and
869 neatness, and their inventiveness is remarkable. *Kalampoo* husks are turned into medicine-pots; fragments of calabash or potsherd represent the hoe-blade which is essential to many ancestor shrines; a pronged twig is a shrine's 'tree'; the tail of a stillborn kid or lamb, tied with string and feathers in the same way as adults do, is a shrine's 'tail', another object commonly dedicated to real shrines. There are 'roots' —of grass—as in adult medicine-pots, and other appurtenances.